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INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 /001 R

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EXDIS-DOD HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE FOR SECDEF

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: MORNING SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT REPORTS

PRC MILITARY AID TO BOTSWANA?

; GOVERNMENT SOURCE HAS INFORMED EMBASSY GABORONE THAT BOTSWANA HAS AGREED TO ACCEPT CHINESE MILITARY AID TO HELP PROTECT AGAINST RHODESIAN BORDER INCURSIONS. THE SOURCE SAID SEVENTY TONS OF CHINESE WEAPONS AND "NOT MORE THAN A HALF-DOZEN ADVISORS" WERE EXPECTED TO ARRIVE "ANY DAY."

EMBASSY COMMENT: DESPITE OFFICIAL DENIALS, THERE IS GOOD REASON TO BELIEVE THAT BOTSWANA MAY HAVE ACCEPTED SUCH A
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PRC OFFER. FROM THE GOVERNMENT'S PERSPECTIVE, CHINESE AID WOULD:

--SILENCE OPPOSITION CRITICS WHO CLAIM THE GOVERNMENT IS NOT PROTECTING BOTSWANA'S TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY;

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--HELP KEEP SOVIET INFLUENCE TO A MINIMUM; AND

--ENABLE BOTSWANA TO OBTAIN NEEDED ARMS AT NO COST.
(CONFIDENTIAL) GABORONE 2386, 12/29.

2. BAHRAIN STALLS ON MIDDLE EAST FORCE TALKS

AMBASSADOR CLUVERIUS REPORTS THAT BAHRAIN'S PRIME MINISTER BACKED OUT ON A MEETING SCHEDULED FOR DECEMBER 28 TO DISCUSS THE FUTURE OF THE MIDDLE EAST FORCE. THE AMBASSADOR WAS REFERRED INSTEAD TO THE FOREIGN MINISTER, WHO SAID THAT:

--THE PRIME MINISTER'S EARLIER INITIATIVE WAS A MERE "CHAT."

--NOTHING HAD HAPPENED WHICH WOULD CHANGE THE DECISION THAT THE MIDDLE EAST FORCE SHOULD WITHDRAW BY THE END OF JUNE.

--THE MIDDLE EAST FORCE COULD BE ALLOWED TO STAY ONLY IF ITS POLITICAL IMPACT ON BAHRAIN WAS REDUCED BY HAVING OTHER COUNTRIES IN THE AREA SHARE IN HOSTING IT.

--US ARMS ASSISTANCE, WHILE DESIRABLE, WOULD NOT BE A SUFFICIENT BASIS FOR ALLOWING THE FORCE TO REMAIN.

--THERE WILL BE TIME AFTER JANUARY 20 TO DISCUSS THE MATTER.
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AMBASSADOR'S COMMENT: THIS LATEST IN THE SERIES OF YES, NO, MAYBE SIGNALS WE HAVE RECEIVED INDICATES THAT THE FOREIGN MINISTER HAS BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE RULING FAMILY AS THE PRIME ACTOR IN THIS MATTER. SINCE HE IS NOT ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT EITHER THE US NAVY OR ARMS ASSISTANCE, THIS IS NOT ENCOURAGING. IT MAY STILL BE POSSIBLE, HOWEVER, TO COME TO AN AGREEMENT THAT BOTH SIDES CAN LIVE WITH. (SECRET) MAMAMA 2206, 12/28; (CONFIDENTIAL) MANAMA 2219,, 12/29 (EXDIS).

3. KUWAIT UNHAPPY OVER OPEC AFTERMATH

DURING AMBASSADOR MAESTRONE'S CALL ON DECEMBER 27,

--KUWAIT HAD GONE TO THE MEETING PLEDGED TO AN INCREASE OF NO MORE THAN 10 PERCENT.

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--THE TWO STEP INCREASE AGREED UPON BY THE OPEC ELEVEN HAD KEPT THAT PLEDGE, SINCE THE SECOND INCREASE MIGHT NOT TAKE PLACE.

--YET KUWAIT WAS BEING BLAMED FOR ITS ROLE IN NEGOTIATING THE TWO STEP COMPROMISE.

SABAH ALSO SAID HE WAS DISMAYED BY THE SAUDI TACTIC OF TRYING TO DICTATE TO THE OTHER OPEC MEMBERS.

AMBASSADOR'S COMMENT: SABAH WAS GREATLY CONCERNED THAT KUWAIT WOULD BE GROUPED AMONG THE MORE GREEDY OPEC MEMBERS SUCH AS IRAN, IRAQ AND LIBYA. IT MAY BE POSSIBLE TO CONVINCE KUWAIT TO OPPOSE THE FURTHER 5 PERCENT INCREASE IN JULY, PARTICULARLY IF SAUDI ARABIA, AS SABAH SEEMS TO BELIEVE, IS WILLING TO RAISE ITS PRICE INCREASE TO 10 PERCENT. (CONFIDENTIAL) KUWAIT 5962, 12/28.

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4. SULZBURGER REVIEWS QADHAFI MEETING

C. L. SULZBURGER BRIEFED CHARGE CARLE ON HIS RECENT INTERVIEW WITH COLONEL QADHAFI, WHICH TOOK PLACE ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF TRIPOLI IN A KEROSENE-LIT TENT. ACCORDING TO SULZBURGER, QADHAFI:

--REITERATED INTEREST IN A DIALOGUE WITH THE US, PREFERABLY AT A HIGH LEVEL; AND

--DWELLED EXTENSIVELY ON HIS GREEN BOOK, WHICH HE CLAIMED MAY HAVE INFLUENCED EVEN FRANCE'S GISCARD.

CHARGE'S COMMENT: THOUGH QADHAFI BROKE NO NEW GROUND, THE VIP TREATMENT ACCORDED SULZBURGER INDICATES THAT LIBYA IS STILL INTERESTED IN KEEPING OPEN ITS LINES TO THE US. (CONFIDENTIAL) TRIPOLI 1630, 12/19 (LIMDIS).

5. BHUTTO CONCLUDES FRIENDLY VISIT WITH SHAH

THE PAKISTANI AMBASSADOR HAS TOLD CHARGE MIKLOS THAT RELATIONS BETWEEN THE SHAH AND PRIME MINISTER BHUTTO CONTINUE TO BE "MILK AND HONEY" FOLLOWING THE LATTER'S "PRIVATE" VISIT TO IRAN DECEMBER 26-27. THE AMBASSADOR SAID:

--BOTH RULERS SPECULATED ON U.S. POLICIES UNDER THE NEXT ADMINISTRATION, AND HOPED CONSTRUCTIVE SIGNS WOULD BE FORTHCOMING SOON.

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--IRAN WILL CONTINUE TO PROVIDE PAKISTAN WITH
ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE, AND PROBABLY WILL PROVIDE
100,000 TONS OF OIL FREE OF CHARGE. (CONFIDENTIAL)
TEHRAN 12855, 12/29.

6. PEREZ VIEWS THE TENSION BETWEEN PERU AND ECUADOR
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VENEZUELA'S PRESIDENT PEREZ DISCUSSED AT SOME LENGTH WITH
AMBASSADOR VAKY THE INCREASE IN TENSION BETWEEN PERU AND
ECUADOR. IN HIS VIEW:

--THOUGH THE SITUATION IS UNSTABLE, NO HOSTILITIES
ARE IMMINENT.

--ECUADOR PERHAPS BEARS THE GREATER FAULT, HAVING
EXACERBATED MATTERS BY CUTTING OFF THE PROJECTED
VISIT OF PRESIDENT MORALES BERMUDEZ.

PEREZ SAID HE INTENDS TO SUGGEST TO PRESIDENT LOPEZ
MICHELSEN THAT VENEZUELA AND COLOMBIA, AS AN ANDEAN PACT
INITIATIVE, URGE MODERATION AND CONSTRUCTIVE APPROACHES
TO THE REGION'S PROBLEMS. (SECRET) CARACAS 14834,
12/29 (EXDIS).
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: MORNING SUMMARY
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 30 DEC 1976
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ElyME
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE313255
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: O: GAMBER
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760476-0009
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t1976123/aaaaaccs.tel
Line Count: 199
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN SSO
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ElyME
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 01 MAR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <01 MAR 2004 by GarlanWA>; APPROVED <13 OCT 2004 by ElyME>
Review Markings:

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US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: MORNING SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT REPORTS PRC MILITARY AID TO BOTSWANA? ; GOVERNMENT SOURCE HAS INFORMED EMBASSY GABORONE
TAGS: PFOR, XX
To: JCS DOD CIA MULTIPLE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006